



Résumé Writing Guide for College Students

A résumé is a written summary of your educational background, professional experiences, and accomplishments used to apply for jobs or internships. This guide will assist you in developing an effective résumé for your job or internship search. A good résumé is the key to a job interview which can then lead to a job offer. Include information about your academically or professionally related experiences to show you are a good fit for the job.

Before creating a résumé, determine the reason for doing so. Reflect on the following questions:

- How will it be used...at a job fair, via a job application, sent online, via mail, shared with your network?
- What type of job are you looking for?
- What skills do you have?
- What experiences do you have?
- What qualities do you possess?
- Do you have any areas of knowledge expertise?

Use the answers to these questions to develop and brainstorm what to include on your résumé. If this is your first time writing a résumé you may want to use the Résumé Writing Worksheet available from the Career Center.

According to a study done by The Ladders, an online job search site, employers may only take as little as six seconds to review a résumé. **SIX!?!** You have just six seconds to grab their attention and get them interested in reading further. Being concise and organized in your format, along with only including relevant information to the job application, may be the ticket to gaining employer attention.

This guide will take you through each section of a résumé and provide examples of each to form a completed example résumé which can be found on pg. 8. Use this guide and its attached resources to assist you in completing each section. Then have someone in the Career Center critique your draft résumé.

Types of Résumés

There are two distinct types of résumés.

- Chronological
 - Chronological résumés list experiences in reverse chronological order, meaning the most recent experiences first and then working backwards in time. These are easy to scan through quickly for employers. Chronological résumés are what most traditional students and entry level professionals choose to use. The example résumé on pg. 8 is a chronological.
- Functional
 - Functional résumés are sorted by specific skills that relate to the application. Section headings are areas of skill or knowledge expertise. Functional résumés do include a reverse chronological employment summary section. This type of résumé can be most helpful for job seekers who are career changers or have many years of experience.

There is a third résumé type that is a combination of the two main types. Most résumés have components of both types by listing different functional sections, but using reverse chronological order for the experiences within each section. For example, two types of experience sections may be included; a Relevant Experience section and a Work Experience section. This would consist of listing most relevant information in the first section and other part-time, non-related work in the second.

General Formatting

Résumés generally are one page and include only the most relevant information for the job application. Graduate students or graduates with lots of professional experience can sometimes have a two page résumé. If applying to graduate school use a curriculum vitae which is a multiple page résumé.

Do not leave a lot of white space on the résumé, but on the other hand do not try to force so much information on the page that it becomes jumbled and cramped. Strive for a good balance of text and white space. Only one font type should be used, however 2-3 styles of that font may be included such as bold, italics, all/small caps, or underlined. Use styles to draw attention to important items like section headings, organization names, or your experience titles. Do not include a picture of yourself or anything else. Use color sparingly; one accent color for a line is acceptable. All fonts should be black and easily readable. (One exception to this rule is for graphic designers.)

Tip: Name your electronic file something easy to find and include the date last updated (ex. SmithRésumé042014.doc)

Contact Information

Probably the most important information on your résumé is your contact information. If this information is left off the résumé, you are guaranteed to not get the job, because no matter how qualified you are employers will not know who you are or how to reach you. Here are components to include in your contact information:

- Name
 - Make this bold and a bit larger than the rest of the résumé. Use your full given name not a nickname.
- Address
 - If you are temporarily living locally or on-campus, include both your current and permanent addresses.
 - Some employers still send information to applicants via old fashion postal service. If you leave this information out you may not receive follow up information about your application status.
- Phone Number
 - Include only one phone number. The one that you will answer and have the best access to. Most times, this is a cell/mobile phone.
- Email Address
 - Include only one email address. Use a professional email address that is some iteration of your name. Use your @mail.usf.edu email or a personal email with a professional username. Things like Raysgurl2010@yahoo.com or live4surfing@gmail.com are not appropriate.
- Website, Portfolio, or LinkedIn Profile
 - Optional information to include on the résumé can be a link to an online portfolio or website, or your LinkedIn profile. This allows an employer to review your professional artifacts.

Contact Information Example:

Sally R. Smith

123 Main Street, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Email: sallystudent@mail.usf.edu Phone: 555-123-4567

LinkedIn: <http://linkedin.com/in/sallysmith/>

Objective

The objective is an optional section of your résumé. It can be a valuable piece of the résumé if well written. A good objective includes details, is job specific, and is concise. The objective statement should be employer-oriented and not self-oriented, that is it should explain what you will do for the employer not vice versa.

Objective Examples:

- To obtain an internship in psychology to gain experience with patients suffering psychological disorders while providing my technological skills to develop client databases.
- The position of Account Specialist at Widgets International where I can increase client satisfaction with my problem solving, communication, and customer service skills.
- Seeking the position of Marine Biologist at Ocean's Eleven Corporation using knowledge of ocean life and its impact on its surroundings in order to assist marine projects.

Education

This section should include a list of academic experiences resulting in credentials. If you attend, but did not receive a degree or certificate you do not need to list the school. High school should be left off of a résumé, as a diploma is required to attend college. High school also dates a student giving the employer a range to estimate the applicant's age. The education section should include the full name of the institution and the name of the degree or certificate spelled out. The actual or anticipated graduation date should be listed in lieu of a date range of attendance. Include any major, minor, or concentrations with each degree.

Optional items to include in the education section are:

- GPA: include if above 3.0
- Study Abroad Experience (included in example)
- Relevant Courses: List only classes completed that relate directly to the position application
- Academic Projects: List any major research papers, thesis, or other projects related to the position application
- Scholarships: Academic scholarships may be included here as well.

Education Example:

University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP)	Anticipated May 2017
<i>Bachelor of Science</i>	
Major: Biology Concentration: Marine Biology	
GPA: 3.85	
<i>Study Abroad Experience</i>	
Field Studies in Biology: Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico	May 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explored the diversity of sea grasses, mangroves, and coral reef systems that are located along the coast• Observed and explore the important adaptation of bioluminescent microorganisms• Discussed biology based research with local scientists and observed local culture and context	

Employment Experience

The employment, work history, or experience section is a reverse chronological list of the jobs that you have had or related experiences that may have been paid or unpaid. There are 4 key pieces of information needed for each experience: the organization, the location, the dates of the experience, title of experience. Then list your experience in a bulleted list.

Bullet points are the best way to list your skills, accomplishments, and duties. Employers can quickly glance at this list and get a good sense of your abilities in a few seconds. Begin each bullet point with an action verb to grab their attention. Develop your bullet points around accomplishments. Each bullet should then demonstrate one or multiple skills/abilities, qualities/characteristics, or knowledge that you possess. It is even better when you can quantify your bullets, for example list the number of customers you assisted, the percentage of sales you increased, or the dollar amount of a budget you managed. Avoid using 'I' or any personal pronouns in your descriptions of experiences. Do not use the same action words throughout the résumé. Use the list of action verbs on pg. 6 of this document to help you create exciting bullet points.

A great way to develop your experience section is to use the job description of the positions you were in previously. These job descriptions are often bulleted lists of the duties you completed. Also, look at job descriptions of positions you would like to apply for and include keywords and appropriate industry vernacular.

Employment Experience Examples:

Florida Atlantic Aquarium, Jacksonville, FL	May 2013-August 2013
<i>Marine Mammal Intern</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepared diet and daily food for consumption according to animal feeding schedule• Assisted trainers during training sessions by providing equipment and following direction• Conducted enrichments sessions and interact with aquarium visitors• Maintained detailed records of animal behavior, diet, and health condition	

JC Penny Department Stores, St. Petersburg, FL

November 2011-May 2013

Sales Associate

- Used product knowledge to assist customers in the selection and purchase of merchandise
- Achieved high level of sales (\$250/hour compared to department average \$170/hour)
- Processed incoming merchandise reconciling any discrepancies
- Received three "Exceeds Standards" awards for outstanding customer service

Reach Out Garden Emporium, St. Petersburg, FL

August 2009-December 2011

General Operations Assistant

- Developed a new system for maintaining the grounds of the garden
- Managed a staff of 12 employees throughout a 6-day work week
- Implemented new policies for training within company guidelines

Skills/Qualifications

A skills or qualifications section is beneficial to point out some of the technical or career related skills you possess. Showcase your areas of expertise and specific technical skills that relate directly to the job application. Some skills to list might include language skills, technology skills, equipment, and other hard skills. (Examples are: HTML Coding, Smart Board Utilization, Strategic Planning Processes, Six Sigma, Compound Microscopes, SPSS Software, SafeServ, etc.)

According to Forbes.com, avoid using superfluous words or cliché characteristics like dedicated, intense, hardworking, or people-person. This is not the place to list all of your transferable skills and qualities. Things like communication, teamwork, organization, etc. should be showcased through your experience section.

Skills Example:

Skills

Microsoft Office (Advanced in Word and Excel, Basic knowledge of PowerPoint)

Fluent in Spanish

PADI Scuba Certification

Activities/Volunteer

Listing your student organizations, activities or volunteer experiences is an optional but highly encouraged section. Employers like to see student engagement and leadership on résumés in most any field. It shows that you are able to work with others and that you might be a good colleague and coworker. Depending on how much space you have on your résumé, this section can simply be a list of the organizations or detailed like a work experience. First time résumé writers, if you do not have work experience you may include some high school activities until you have new collegiate experiences to add to this section.

Activities/Volunteer Experience Examples:

ACTIVITIES

USFSP Marine Adventure Club

August 2010-Present

President (August 2012-May 2013)

USFSP Harborside Activities Board

November 2011-Present

USFSP Wellness Center P.E.E.R.S.

November 2011-Present

(Note: We did not spell out the university name because we indicated what USFSP stands for in the education section)

Volunteer Experience

Springhouse Homeless Shelter

May 2012 - June 2012

Clearwater, FL

Volunteer Child Care Provider

- Supervised and ensured safety of children while their mothers attended classes
- Helped create a safe, caring and supportive environment for homeless shelter guests
- Provided administrative support by answering phones, filing and ordering supplies

Additional Optional Sections

Here is a list of additional optional sections that could be included on a résumé:

- Publications
 - If your work (writing, poems, research, etc.) has been published list it on your résumé. List it in the style you would cite something in a paper for your field. Styles might include APA, MLA, Chicago style, etc.
- Honors/Awards
 - Be sure to list the title of the award, date received, and the organization bestowing the honor
- Presentations
 - List any presentations such as symposiums, conferences, or community presentations. Be sure to include the date of the presentation
- Languages
 - If you are fluent in multiple languages a separate section might be warranted. List your proficiency levels in each language.
- Professional Associations
 - List the name of the association and your membership dates.

Résumé Tips

Tailor Your Résumé

The most successful résumés are job specific. In other words, the résumé is targeted toward the industry or job application. Focused résumés with targeted key words, content skills, and job aligned knowledge can increase your chances of obtaining an interview. Tailor your résumé to each individual job you are applying for by reviewing the job description against your skills and experiences. Then create a résumé that shows employers you have identical skills to what they are looking for in a candidate.

One vs. Two Pages

A résumé is generally meant to be a one page document. It is best to keep the résumé short and concise. The résumé does not need to include every job you have ever had, but it might if you do not have a lot of experience. The résumé is meant to be a summary of relevant experiences. There are some instances that multiple pages are warranted, such as graduate school applications, graduate school alumni résumés, and students with abundant relevant experience. The rule of thumb is to keep a résumé to one page.

Follow Submission Instructions

Your first task as an employee is to submit your application. It is very important to follow the application/résumé submission directions perfectly. If you are unable to follow these directions it shows the employer how you will follow directions as an employee. For example if a company asks you to submit your résumé as a PDF, don't send them a .doc file. This will most likely result in the employer quickly deleting your résumé from the candidate pool.

Using Online Résumé Templates

Be cautious of online résumé templates. There are positives and negatives to using a template. The positives include they are easy to create because the format is already set. The negatives include that it provides no individuality and your résumé may blend into the hundreds of résumés received by the employer. Templates can be very difficult to edit and add more information to after your first draft. It is best to use the template only as a guide and to set up your résumé on your own using a similar format.

Résumé Don'ts

When creating a résumé DO NOT:

- Have any spelling or grammatical errors
- Include any false information on your résumé
- Use colored paper when printing and a mailing
- Include information which is illegal for employer to ask you interview questions about, such as, religion, gender, ethnicity, birthdate, race, nationality, etc.
- Include your references on your résumé. Instead create a separate document for that information and do not list "References Available Upon Request"

ACTION VERBS FOR RÉSUMÉS

Action verbs should be used to describe your job task descriptions, responsibilities, and skills. A variety of action verbs can stand out and give an overall summary of your experience and skills. The following are some common action words that may be useful in preparing your résumé:

Achieved	Defined	Gathered	Marketed	Protected	Sold
Acted	Delegated	Generated	Mediated	Provided	Solved
Adapted	Delivered	Guided	Memorized	Publicized	Sorted
Administered	Designed	Handled	Met	Purchased	Spoke
Advised	Detailed	Headed	Modeled	Questioned	Studied
Analyzed	Detected	Helped	Monitored	Raised	Summarized
Anticipated	Determined	Hypothesized	Motivated	Realized	Supervised
Arbitrated	Developed	Identified	Navigated	Reasoned	Supplied
Arranged	Devised	Illustrated	Negotiated	Received	Synthesized
Assembled	Diagnosed	Imagined	Observed	Reconciled	Systematized
Assessed	Directed	Implemented	Obtained	Recommended	Tabulated
Attained	Discovered	Improved	Offered	Recorded	Talked
Audited	Dispensed	Improvised	Operated	Recruited	Taught
Budgeted	Displayed	Increased	Ordered	Reduced	Team-built
Built	Disproved	Influenced	Organized	Referred	Tended
Calculated	Dissected	Informed	Originated	Rehabilitated	Tested
Chartered	Distributed	Initiated	Oversaw	Related	Trained
Checked	Diverted	Inspected	Painted	Remembered	Transcribed
Classified	Drew	Inspired	Perceived	Reported	Translated
Coached	Drove	Installed	Performed	Represented	Treated
Collected	Edited	Instituted	Persuaded	Researched	Traveled
Communicated	Established	Instructed	Photographed	Resolved	Trouble-shot
Compared	Estimated	Integrated	Piloted	Responded	Tutored
Compiled	Evaluated	Interpreted	Planned	Restored	Typed
Composed	Examined	Interviewed	Played	Retrieved	Umpired
Computed	Explained	Invented	Predicted	Reviewed	Understood
Conducted	Expanded	Inventoried	Prepared	Sang	Undertook
Consolidated	Experimented	Investigated	Prescribed	Scheduled	Unified
Constructed	Expressed	Judged	Presented	Selected	United
Conserved	Extracted	Lectured	Printed	Separated	Upgraded
Consulted	Facilitated	Led	Processed	Serviced	Verbalized
Controlled	Filed	Learned	Produced	Set	Verified
Coordinated	Financed	Listened	Programmed	Shaped	Washed
Counseled	Followed	Logged	Projected	Shared	Weighed
Created	Formulated	Maintained	Promoted	Showed	Worked
Decided	Founded	Managed	Proofread	Sketched	Wrote

Résumé Rubric

The following is a rubric which can be used to measure the strength of your résumé. Review the sections and circle where your résumé aligns with the description. Update your résumé so it aligns with the 'Excellent' descriptions.

Résumé Status	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Format	This résumé fills the page but is not overcrowded. There are no grammar or spelling errors. It can be easily scanned. A simple easy to read font has been used.	This résumé almost fills the page, but has some uneven white space. There may be a single spelling or grammar error.	The font and spacing of this résumé are not appealing and cannot be easily scanned. There are spelling errors and grammatical mistakes.	This résumé is either one-half page or two to three pages long. The font is too big or may be hard to read. There is more white space than words on the page. There are multiple spelling and/or grammar errors.
Education Section	This section is organized, clear, and well defined. It highlights the most pertinent information and includes: institution and its location, graduation date, major, degree, GPA, study abroad (as appropriate), and any relevant course work.	This section is well organized and easy to read. It includes institution and its location, graduation date, major, and degree. GPA and "extra" information, such as study abroad and course work are missing.	Information such as institution and its location, graduation date, and major are included, but degree and GPA are not listed. This section is not well organized and there is no order to how information is formatted.	This section is missing the most crucial information. Institution is listed, but not its location and graduation date is missing. The major is included, but not degree. No GPA is stated.
Experience Section	This section is well defined, and information relates to the intended career field. Places of work, location, titles, and dates are included for each position. Descriptions are clear and formatted as bullets beginning with action verbs. (This section could be split into related and other experience.)	Places of work, location, titles, and dates are included for each position. Descriptions are formatted as bullets beginning with action verbs, but are not detailed enough to help the reader understand the experience. Information does not relate 100 percent to the intended career field.	Descriptions are not presented in bulleted lists that begin with action verbs. Instead, complete sentences in paragraph form are used to describe positions. Places of work are included for each position, but not locations, dates, and titles.	There is no order to the descriptions of each position. Descriptions are not detailed and don't illustrate the experience. No locations and dates of employment are listed.
Honors/ Activities	This section is well organized and easy to understand. Activities and honors are listed, and descriptions include skills gained and leadership roles held. Dates of involvement are listed.	This section includes all necessary information, but is difficult to follow. Leadership roles within organizations are listed, but skills are not defined. Dates of involvement are listed.	This section is missing key information such as leadership positions held or dates of involvement. Organizations are listed; the organization, not individual involvement in each, are described.	This section is missing—or contains very little—information. Organization titles or dates of involvement are not included, and there are no descriptions.
Anticipated Result	Résumé should effectively land you an interview.	Résumé could land you an interview (borderline case).	Résumé is average, needs improvement to rise to the "top of the stack."	Résumé needs significant improvement and would be discarded during screening

Modified from *Résumé Rubric* by Amy Diepenbrock. Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers.
<http://www.naceweb.org/gg/résumé-rubric.aspx>

Sally R. Smith

123 Main Street, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Email: sallystudent@mail.usf.edu Phone: 555-123-4567

LinkedIn: <http://linkedin.com/in/sallyrsmith/>

OBJECTIVE

Seeking the position of Marine Biologist at Ocean's Eleven Aquarium using knowledge of ocean life and its impact on its surroundings in order to assist marine projects.

EDUCATION

University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP)

Anticipated May 2014

Bachelor of Science

Major: Biology Concentration: Marine Biology

GPA: 3.85

Study Abroad Experience

Field Studies in Biology: Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico

May 2013

- Explored the diversity of sea grasses, mangroves, and coral reef systems that are located along the coast
- Observed and explore the important adaptation of bioluminescent microorganisms
- Discussed biology based research with local scientists and observed local culture and context

EXPERIENCE

Florida Atlantic Aquarium, Jacksonville, FL

June 2013-August 2013

Marine Mammal Intern

- Prepared diet and daily food for consumption according to animal feeding schedule
- Assisted trainers during training sessions by providing equipment and following direction
- Conducted enrichments sessions and interact with aquarium visitors
- Maintained detailed records of animal behavior, diet, and health condition

JC Penny Department Stores, St. Petersburg, FL

November 2011-May 2013

Sales Associate

- Used product knowledge to assist customers in the selection and purchase of merchandise
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- Processed incoming merchandise reconciling any discrepancies
- Received three "Exceeds Standards" awards for outstanding customer service

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August 2009-December 2011

General Operations Assistant

- Developed a new system for maintaining the grounds of the garden
- Managed a staff of 25 employees throughout a 6-day work week
- Implemented new policies for training within company guidelines

ACTIVITIES

USFSP Marine Adventure Club

August 2010-Present

President (August 2012-May 2013)

USFSP Harborside Activities Board

November 2011-Present

USFSP Wellness Center P.E.E.R.S.

November 2011-Present

SKILLS

Microsoft Office (Advanced in Word and Excel, Basic knowledge of PowerPoint)

Fluent in Spanish

PADI Scuba Certification